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# LOGIC OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

AND

## OTHER PAPERS

BY

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

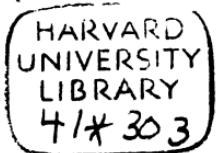
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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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SEVERAL papers in this Volume were revised by the Author; others are republished (1860) in their original form.\*

Two of those in the latter class demand a special remark, in justice to the Author's memory. The "Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected," were always kept in abeyance, with the intention of being considerably extended. In like manner, the paper "On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth," was marked out for alteration and enlargement.

EDINBURGH, *January 1863.*

\* The paper on the "Traditions of the Rabbins," inadvertently included with the above in Messrs Hogg's original edition, having been discovered to be the work of Dr Croly, is now omitted, and its place supplied by "The Logic of Political Economy." The latter is here reprinted, by permission, from the edition published by Messrs William Blackwood & Sons in 1844

EDINBURGH, *February 18, 1876*



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# LETTERS TO A YOUNG MAN

WHOSE EDUCATION HAS BEEN NEGLECTED.

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## LETTER I.

MY DEAR SIR,—When I had the pleasure of meeting you at Ch—, for the second time in my life, I was much concerned to remark the general dejection of your manner. I may now add, that I was also much surprised; your cousin's visit to me having made it no longer a point of delicacy to suppress that feeling. General report had represented you as in possession of all which enters into the worldly estimate of happiness—great opulence, unclouded reputation, and freedom from unhappy connexions. That you had the priceless blessing of unfluctuating health, I know upon your own authority. And the concurring opinions of your friends, together with my own opportunities for observation, left me no room to doubt that you wanted not the last and mightiest among the sources of happiness—a fortunate constitution of mind, both for moral and intellectual ends. So many blessings as these, meeting in the person of one man, and yet all in some mysterious way defeated and poisoned, presented a problem too interesting, both to the selfish and the generous curiosity of man, to

make it at all wonderful that at that time and place you should have been the subject of much discussion. Now and then some solutions of the mystery were hazarded ; in particular, I remember one from a young lady of seventeen, who said, with a positive air, "That Mr. M—'s dejection was well known to arise from an unfortunate attack in early life," which assurance appeared to have great weight with some other young ladies of sixteen. But, upon the whole, I think that no account of the matter was proposed at that time which satisfied myself, or was likely to satisfy any reflecting person.

At length the visit of your cousin L—, in his road to Th—, has cleared up the mystery in a way more agreeable to myself than I could have ventured to anticipate from any communication short of that which should acquaint me with the entire dispersion of the dejection under which you laboured. I allow myself to call such a disclosure agreeable, partly upon the ground that where the grief or dejection of our friends admits of no important alleviation, it is yet satisfactory to know that it may be traced to causes of adequate dignity ; and, in this particular case, I have not only that assurance, but the prospect of contributing some assistance to your emancipation from these depressing recollections, by co-operating with your own efforts in the way you have pointed out for supplying the defects of your early education.

L— explained to me all that your own letter had left imperfect ; in particular, how it was that you came to be defrauded of the education to which even your earliest and humblest prospects had entitled you ; by what heroic efforts, but how vainly, you laboured to repair that greatest of losses ; what remarkable events concurred to raise you to your present state of prosperity ; and all other circumstances